

HHS Releases \$338 Million to Expand Community Health Centers, Serve More Patients

Grants Will Support Centers That Care for the Uninsured, Support Up to 6,400 Jobs

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) today announced the release of \$338 million to expand services offered at the nation's community health centers. The money was made available by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and comes as more Americans join the ranks of the uninsured.

"More Americans are losing their health insurance and turning to health centers for care," said Health Resources and Services Administrator (HRSA) Mary *Wakefield*, Ph.D., R.N. "These grants will aid centers in their efforts to provide care to an increasing number of patients during the economic downturn."

The grants -- titled Increased Demand for Services (IDS) grants -- will be distributed to 1,128 federally qualified health center grantees. Health centers will use the funds over the next two years to create or retain approximately 6,400 health center jobs.

Grantees submitted plans explaining how the IDS funds would be used. Strategies to expand services may include, but are not limited to, adding new providers, expanding hours of operations or expanding services. The funds will provide care to an additional 2.1 million patients over the next two years, including approximately 1 million uninsured people.

Health centers deliver preventive and primary care services to patients regardless of their ability to pay; charges for services are set according to income. Health centers served more than 16 million patients in 2007, about 40 percent of whom had no health insurance.

The IDS awards are the second set of health center grants provided through the Recovery Act. On March 2, President Obama announced grants worth \$155 million to establish 126 new health centers. Those grants will provide access to health center care for 750,000 people in 39 states and two territories.

To see a list of grantees by state, go to <http://www.hhs.gov/recovery/programs/hrsa/idsgawards.html>. To find a health center near you or to learn more about health centers, visit <http://bphc.hrsa.gov/>.

The activities described in this release are being funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). To track the progress of HHS activities funded through the ARRA, visit www.hhs.gov/recovery. To track all federal funds provided through the ARRA, visit www.recovery.gov.

The Health Resources and Services Administration is part of the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services. HRSA is the primary federal agency responsible for improving access to health care services for people who are uninsured, isolated, or medically vulnerable. For more information about HRSA and its programs, visit www.hrsa.gov